

Enjoying a belated street party in honour of the Queen's birthday are (from left) Marilyn Green, Butch Barry and Barry. Courier photo 1270713c

turned out to be everything we hoped for.

"Everyone was in re-

CHEERS, MA'AM: Andrew and Jane Stanley raise a glass to the good health of the Queen Mother at the belated street party at La

Gardens in Paddock Wood

Courier photo 1270

Gipsies claim closure of horse fair is racial

PROTESTING gipsies claim the closure of Horsmonden Horse Fair is racial and have begun legal steps in a bid to save it.

Following a meeting on Monday, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council is applying to the Home Office for enforcement action to ensure safe closure of the annual event by police and a five-mile trespass ban.

Eli Frankham, from the Romany Rights Association, said: "We're going to have a protest. It is the oldest, religiously held horse fair in Britain."

"What right do the council have to stop me having a picnic and meeting my relatives."

"I don't want confrontation, but I shall attend with my family and pony and cart."

"This is racist. We're clean, decent, Romany people who have rights."

The event has been held on the village green on the second Sunday of September since before the second world war, and was cancelled in May.

But a representative from

the Gypsy Council, Gratten Puxon, said: "We contacted the Home Office on Tuesday opposing the issue of such an order and were told they would hear a representation from us before the order is issued."

"We are now briefing our solicitor to oppose the issuing order."

He added: "Many travellers will still attempt to come."

Way of life

"We would be prepared to see the fair reduce in size to match the space available on the green, but we don't want it to extinguish altogether."

"It is the biggest get-together south of the Thames, and part of the traditional Romany way of life."

Weald Police spokeswoman, Rosy Alexander, said: "There will be a police presence to advise people who are not aware of the closure."

"We are just one of the agencies working towards a trouble-free cancellation."

Dome trip a roaring success

PADDOCK Wood Lions and Lionesses joined the Chernobyl Children's Life Line Charity on a trip to the Millennium Dome on Tuesday.

Thirty-two children suffering after effects of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, left Brenchley at 9am as part of the charity's four week break.

Seven lion clubs from the local area contributed £100 to-

wards the visit, including Tonbridge, Tunbridge Wells and Staplehurst.

Paddock Wood Lions chairman, Brian King, said: "It was an excellent day. The children were real ambassadors and so well behaved."

Tamara Kuzmich, one of the children's language teacher's from Belarus, said: "Everyone has been kind during our stay."



ALL SMILES: Happy days at the Woodlands Health Centre on Allington Road, Paddock Wood, where the Paddock Wood Lions and Lionesses made a presentation of an £800 syringe-driver. Pictured, from left, are current Lions president Phyllis King, GP Karen Potterton, Lionesses president at the time of fundraising Joyce Winn and Lions Club president Brian King

Courier photo 1270

Cubs take adults on camping trip

BRENCHLEY and Matfield Cubs are taking parents and guardians on a camping trip over the Bank Holiday weekend.

Thirteen boys are taking part and will leave next Fri-

day to camp at Blacklands Farm in East Grinstead.

Adults and children will be able to experience activities such as hockey, football, archery and grass sledging.

Nigel Piper, 32, assistant cub leader, said: "It is a highlight what Scouting is all about and the fun they have."

"Hopefully everyone enjoys themselves, and recovers on August 28."

Can you help catch criminals?
Caught on camera - page 13

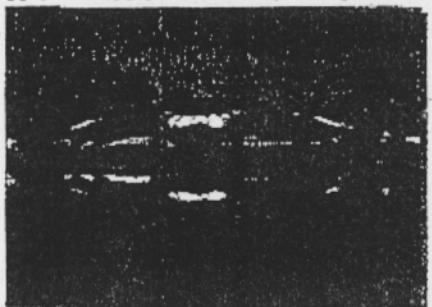
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